An advisory group including people living with HIV/AIDS, NGOs and several experts, especially those working on gender has been constituted. The advisory group will advice Government in all aspects of vaccine development and access such as: ethics of clinical trials; gender and human rights issues; information dissemination; development of guidelines and protocols to address stigma and exclusion of HIV/AIDS infected persons.

Focal Points for plague bacteria

486. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the medical experts have identified four areas in the country which are focal points for plague bacteria;

(b) if so, the details of the areas;

(c) the criteria for the identification of these areas as focal points; and

(d) the preventive measures taken in these areas to prevent the outbreak of the deadly disease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELAFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The focal points for plague exist at the tri-junction of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka and also in the State of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh.

(c) * Cases of plague were reported from the above areas during the pandemic from 1889-1950.

* Case of human plague was reported from Mulbagal, Kolar district in Karnataka in 1966.

* Serosurveillance for plague showed antibodies against Y pestis (Plague organism) in rodents in the tri-junction of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

* Outbreak of plague in Gujarat and Mahrashtra in 1994.

* Suspected outbreak of plague in 1983 and confirmed outbreak of plague in 2002 Himachal Pradesh.

* Field Unit of National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) located at Bangalore coordinates surveillance of plague in endemic States like Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat, Surveillance comprises of serological, entomological and bacteriological study. After 1994, no human plague cases have been reported from any of these States

* The representatives from various endemic States are called in the inter-State plague coordination meetings to review the status of plague surveillance. The last such meeting was held in April, 2002 at Plague Surveillance Unit, Bangalore.

* The State of Himachal Pradesh has been advised to establish a State Plague Surveillance Unit for which all technical help would be extended by NICD, Delhi.

* For making prompt reliable diagnosis of the disease, a state-of-the-art laboratory, meeting all safety and diagnostic criteria of WHO is in existence at NICD, Delhi.

Project of AIIMS for optimal utilisation of surface run-off water

487. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the All India Institute of Medical Sciences has prepared a project for optimal utilisation of surface run-off water and ground water recharging;

(b) if so, whether the Redevelopment Plan 2025 has been prepared;

(c) if so, the details of this projects;

(d) by when it is likely to start; and

(e) the estimated cost in implementing this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) The AIIMS is planning to upgrade their facilities and a detailed Master Plan has already been submitted to Delhi Urban Art Commission. The Master Plan include expansion of housing facilities, expanded hostel facilities, new institutional buildings like Pay Wards, extended OPD, Digestion Centre, Renal Centre, Dental College, Captive Power Plant etc., extensive parking arrangements,